1. Course Description:

This is an advanced methods mini-course focused on forensic interviewing of children. The mini-course is particularly relevant to interviewing children alleged to have been sexually abused, but also be relevant to gathering information from children about a spectrum of traumatic experiences. This mini-course will provide a critical review of the evidence/research that is relied upon in forensic interviewing of children and will provide information about best practice. The course takes a child-centered/social justice approach, will admonish professionals to take into account the child’s needs, developmental stage, and functioning, as well as the specifics of the allegations, when conducting forensic interviews.

2. Course Content:

This course will cover the following areas: 1) forensic versus clinical practice, 2) brief history of forensic interviewing, 3) models of assessing for child sexual abuse, 4) cultural issues that may impact abuse characteristics, reactions to abuse, and interviews with the child, 5) forensic interview structures, protocols, and guidelines, 6) controversies about appropriate questioning techniques and sequencing in a forensic interview, 7) controversies, relevant research, and best practice related to the use of media in forensic interviews, and 8) current practice regarding extended assessments in forensic work.

3. Competencies:

Upon completion of the mini-course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and be able to critically evaluate research related to forensic interviewing.
2. Be knowledgeable about the spectrum of interview protocols, structures, and guidelines.
3. Be able to identify and employ appropriate questioning strategies in conducting a forensic interview,
4. Be knowledgeable about when to employ media in forensic interviews and the controversies related to media.
5. Be able to decide when to conduct an extended forensic assessment.
4. Course Design:
This course will make use of lectures, demonstrations, discussion, role plays, and media such as videotaped interviews with children.

5. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:
- **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed by teaching students sensitivity, respect, and competence when working with children where there are racial, cultural, ethnic, class, religious, gender, or nationality differences. Course material will include a discussion about how culture can impact upon the characteristics of abuse and reactions to it.
- **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by teaching students that children are at a fundamental disadvantage in systems that are controlled by adults. The role of the social worker conducting forensic interviews is to give the child a voice.
- **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation.** This mini-course will not cover the full spectrum of social work intervention, but rather will focus on assessment, which can be related to tertiary prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.
- **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be an integral part of this mini-course. Participants will be exposed to the social science research that is used to guide interview practice and will be taught to critically evaluate it.

6. Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:
Issues of values and ethics of a social work professional as they relate conducting forensic interviews and being responsive to the needs of children who may have been sexually abused or otherwise traumatized will be an integral part of this course.

**PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY**
One of the fundamental ethical values of social work is protecting client confidentiality. In this class, you will view some videos of real clients. Each client has signed a written release to allow his or her case materials to be used for educational purposes, and their names are always changed on the case materials. For some of the case examples, you will read written material before the class. Keep these materials confidential; do not share them with others who are not in the class; when the course is over, please destroy these case materials.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**
If you need an accommodation for a disability, contact me as soon as possible. It is possible that aspects of the course can be modified to facilitate your learning process. There are resources available to help us to meet your needs including Students with Disabilities, the Adaptive Technology Computing Site, etc. If you disclose a disability to me, I will treat that information as private and confidential.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS


CTools: There will be a CTools website for this mini-course. All students registered will have access.

1. Attend all of both days of the mini-course (course credit will not be given without full attendance)
Students must sign in AM and PM of each class day.

2. Participate in class—case discussions, small group exercises

3. Do the required reading—
There is a text and select articles on CTools
Note that it may not be possible for students to complete the reading before the topics are actually covered in the mini-course.

These may be submitted on CTools or via email.
The course will be graded pas, marginal, fail; grades will be posted after the final take-home short answer exams have been read.

Saturday
AM
Differences between forensic and clinical practice with children who may have been sexually abused—reading Chapter 1—pp.3-9; Chapter 2— pp.10-34

Models for conducting a forensic assessment of cases involving allegations of sexual abuse—reading Chapter 3— pp.35-43; Chapter 5— pp.50-57
Case example Maggie

PM
Interview structures—reading Chapter 7— pp.66-89; Lamb et al., NICHD Protocol, Lyon, 10 Step Investigative Interview, Michigan Forensic Interview Protocol (all are on the CTools website)
Case example Jackie

Questioning children—research and practice—reading Chapter 8— pp.90-109
Case example Terry
**Sunday**
**AM**
Use of media in forensic interviews—reading Chapter 9— pp.110-141; Aldrich et al. (on the CTools website)
Case example

**PM**
Is disclosure of sexual abuse an event or a process?—reading Chapter 13— pp.175-190; Chapter 14— pp.191-206; McElvaney, Greene, & Hogan, 2011 (on the CTools website)

Extended assessments—Faller, Nelson-Gardell, & Cordisco Steele, 2011; Malloy, Lyon, & Quas (on the CTools website)
Case example Lily